

Dear esteemed Chairman Powell and Commissioners,
As a citizen who needs to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly distraught by the lack of informative television programming and aghast at the lack of understanding on the part of broadcasters.

Local public affairs constitutes less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story!! Incredible!

Any democracy is at risk when its members do not know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections. Our modern day elections drown in a sea of spin and mud-slinging which have little or nothing to do with the relevant facts we most need to understand as a nation, let alone make the choice of president.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us. This is not just an opportunity for the FCC to fix what is broken; it is an obligation.

Television is the principle means of information dispersal yet its effectiveness is only as good as the content it carries. Since broadcasters have clearly failed in this obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC must define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

Sincerely,

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